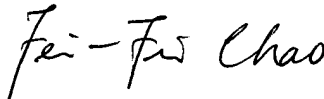


**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

This preliminary amendment is submitted to remove multiple dependent claims and to correct minor stylistic errors in order to conform to the patent practice before the U.S. PTO. No new matter has been introduced.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for examination, and early action in accordance thereof is requested. In the event there is any reason why the application cannot be allowed in this current condition, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned at the number listed below to resolve any problems by Interview or Examiner's Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: December 24, 2003

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